Waples or Walpole: Seventeen siblings from Brixworth v01
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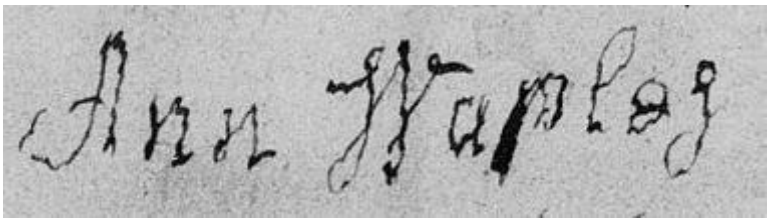
Waples or Walpole: Seventeen siblings from Brixworth

.... some went to Finedon, Flore, Kettering, London, Pitsford and Sherington

by Francis Howcutt



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Introduction

This article is about William and Ann Waples who 300 years ago lived at Brixworth, some six miles north of the centre of Northampton, and their seventeen children. Theirs was a very large family even by contemporary standards. I have not compiled an exhaustive history. In particular, there is probably much scope for further research into the stories of the many children who did survive infancy.

The contents here are the result of research in primary sources, including parish registers and probate records, with thought given to their reliability. This contrasts with some references to members of the family that appear in online family trees. Beware of statements that either mention no source or simply say they are based on vague authority such as 'Ancestry family tree' or 'Gedcom file' – these must be suspect as they do not cite verifiable evidence.

Thank you to:

- Northamptonshire Archives, the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, London Archives and Bethlem Museum of the Mind for conserving and making accessible a vast range of original records.
- Internet Archive and FamilySearch for making freely available online digitised versions of books, maps, newspapers and other resources.
- Rev James Jackson, the vicar of Brixworth from 1735 until his death in 1770. His analytical index to its parish register provides much information from his personal knowledge and gleaned from his flock. It is referred to below as 'Jackson's Index'. The original manuscript is deposited at Northamptonshire Archives with the reference ML380. An article about Jackson's work is freely available online.[1]
- Sherington Historical Society, whose excellent website includes transcriptions of the parish register that provide information about the Thompson family who lived there.[2]

When transcribing documents, obvious abbreviations have been silently expanded. Otherwise, the original spellings are kept. Where this is likely to assist navigation and understanding, long flowing text of the will in Appendix A has been arranged into paragraphs.

Internet links cited were checked on the date of this Introduction. If you find any that are no longer active or whose destinations have changed for the worse, you may be able to find the material that the link previously led to by using the Wayback Machine.[3]

William Waples was a brother of my 7x great grandmother Bridget Walpole (1667/8-1719).

Francis Howcutt
18 December 2025
francishowcutt@gmail.com

[1] *Brixworth – An 18th Century Parish Register Analysis* by Francis Howcutt [1985].
https://archive.org/details/brixworth-parish-register-analysis
[2] https://www.mkheritage.org.uk/sherington/church-records/st-lauds-parish-registers-and-transcriptions/
[3] https://web.archive.org/

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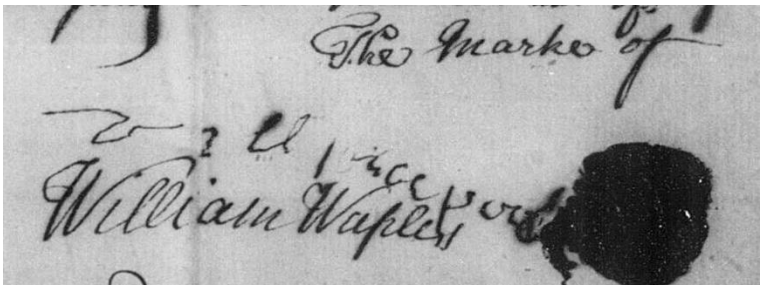
Waples or Walpole?

The heading for the section of Jackson's Index which records members of this family consists of the two main alternative spellings of the surname - 'Waples Walpole'. Numerous variations of these versions are also to be found in parish registers, probate records and other sources in Northamptonshire.

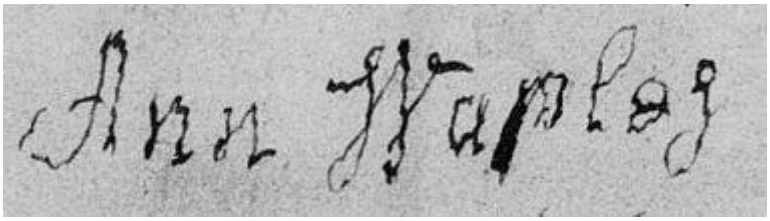
Walpole was the spelling used in 1669/70 when Brixworth parish register recorded the baptism of William, the father of the 17 siblings. It was also the version inscribed on the tombstone of William's mother Lucy in 1707. William's father confidently signed his name as 'Richard Wallpoole' when on 2 September 1676 he witnessed the renunciation by Alice Ladd, widow of Samuel Ladd junior of Kingsthorpe, of any claim to administer the assets of her late husband in favour of Robert Allen of Brixworth.[4] Lucy Walpole made her mark when administration of Richard's estate was granted to her on 13 September 1679.

In view of the above evidence, the family name was standardised as Walpole in an account already published about the lives and origins of Richard and Lucy.[5]

In contrast, in the following generation, William and Ann's preferences are ambiguous. William attempted to sign his name on his will when making what was described as his 'marke' and seems to have tried to write 'Wapool[e?]'.



However, 'Waples' was the spelling used when the numerous baptisms of his children were recorded in the Brixworth parish register and Ann definitely favoured Waples when in 1749 she clearly signed the administration bond for the estate of her son James.



Therefore, Waples has been adopted as the standard form of the surname in the present paper.

[4] Northampton Archdeaconry Court: Administration & inventory of Samuel Ladd.
[5] *Richard & Lucy Walpole of Brixworth* by Francis Howcutt [2024].
https://archive.org/details/richard-lucy-walpole-of-brixworth-v-01/mode/2up

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William Waples & Ann Margetts – the parents

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 14 February 1669/70 of 'Willm. ye son of Rich. Walpole & Luce'. William was the second of their four children, all of whom reached maturity.

The parish register of St Sepulchre, Northampton records the marriage on 15 August 1705 of 'William Waples of Brixworth & Ann Margetts of Harington'. Jackson's Index confirms that William Walpole or Waples (christened 1669/70 and buried 1741) was the man who married 'Anne Margaret born at Kibworth'. This confirms the couple's respective origins despite the fact that William was considerably older than Ann and does not appear to have been previously married.

Kibworth, Leicestershire parish register records the christening on 4 October 1688 of 'Anne Margats daughter of John Margats'. Assuming that event took place soon after her birth, Ann would have been nearly 17 years old when she married her 35-year-old husband and 39 years old when she gave birth to their seventeenth child.

The couple are recorded in the relevant parish registers and in Jackson's Index as the parents of these children. Those listed in the will that their father made in 1740 are shown by the word 'Yes' in the column headed 1740:

Name	Baptised	Married	Buried	1740
Richard	1706			Yes
Mary	1707	n/a	1708 Brixworth	
William	1708/9	Elizabeth Hillam 1743	1756 Holborn St Sepulchre	Yes
John	1709/10	Sarah Cole 1743	1780 Brixworth	Yes
Lucy	1711	George Harris 1740	1776 Finedon	Yes
James	1713	n/a	1713 Brixworth	
Jonathan	1714	Elizabeth Hatton 1740	1791 Pitsford	Yes
Mary	1715/6	Andrew Dickenson		Yes
James	1717		1749 Finedon	Yes
Bridget	1718	n/a	1718 Brixworth	
Sarah	1720	William Rogers 1745	1783 Flore	Yes
Bridget	1721	Joseph Tomson	1786 Sherington, Beds.	Yes
Ann	1723	n/a	1724 Brixworth	
Robert	1724	n/a	1724 Brixworth	
Ann	1725			Yes
Benjamin	1726			
Thomas	1727	n/a	1727/8 Brixworth	

All baptisms other than the first took place at Brixworth.

Brixworth parish register records the burial on 7 December 1741 of 'William Walpole. Butcher. Mortuary pd. 3s.4d.' A mortuary was a payment due to the parish priest on the death of one of the more prosperous inhabitants.

William made his will on 30 November 1740. He did not comment on his physical health but as his attempt to sign his name was very unsteady he may well have been ill at that stage even though it was just over a year before he was buried. The will was proved at

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Northampton Archdeaconry Court on 23 January 1741/2 and its text is set out in Appendix A.

Anne appears to have remained at Brixworth for the rest of her life, as the parish register included the burial on 15 April 1766 of 'Anne widow of William Walpole butcher'.

Six siblings who died as infants

The six children of William and Anne Waples who were buried at Brixworth when they were infants did not all expire immediately after their birth. They survived for the approximate periods indicated below:

Name	Baptised	Buried	Baptism to burial (days)
Mary	27 December 1707	16 May 1708	141
James	28 June 1713	15 July 1713	17
Bridget	20 July 1718	1 August 1718	12
Ann	27 April 1723	13 April 1724	352
Robert	15 May 1724	19 May 1724	4
Thomas	22 November 1727	10 March 1727/8	110

The following accounts are about each of the remaining eleven children in the family.

Richard Waples (1706-)

Harrington parish register records the baptism on 26 December 1706 of 'Richard ye sonn of Will. and Ann Waples'. William and Ann had no child with the name Richard christened at Brixworth, despite Richard having been the name of William's father. Their son Richard was first on the list of apparently all their surviving children when William made his will in 1740; this is consistent with him being the son who had been baptised at Harrington in 1706. The list of 17 children of William and Ann Waples set out in Jackson's index does not fully agree with this evidence – it mentions no child called Richard but starts with a son whom Jackson recorded as William and stated to have been baptised at Harrington and buried on 23 January 1716 [1716/7]. Brixworth parish register recorded the person buried on that date simply as 'William Waples' with no indication of his age. Harrington parish register contains no record of the baptism of a suitable William Waples/Walpole. The William Waples buried in 1716/7 cannot have been the child whom William & Ann had christened as William at Brixworth on 6 January 1708/9 as that individual went on to marry Elisabeth Hillam (as recorded by Jackson and confirmed in the register of St Benet Paul's Wharf, London). Therefore, the connection, if any, between the 17 siblings and the individual who was buried on 23 January 1716/17 is not known.

Richard was evidently still alive on 30 November 1740 when his name headed the list of children in his father's will. However, there do not appear to be other references that definitely relate to him in adulthood. If he remained in Northamptonshire and/or moved to Leicestershire, one or more of these records in parish registers there may relate to him:

- 23 October 1737 – 'Richard Waples & Catherine Hackett by licence' were married at St Martin, Leicester. The licence had been granted on the same day. The

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allegation and bond state that Richard Waples, a carrier of Kettering, (who signed his name) was a bachelor aged 28 years and upwards and that Catherine Hackett of St Martin Leicester was a spinster aged above 21 years. (**)

- 21 October 1738 – 'Alice daughter of Richard Waples and Catharine his wife' was baptised at Kettering.
- 19 June 1749 – 'Richard Waples & Susanna Falkner both of the Parish of Isham were married by a Certificate of Banns' at Pytchley [also recorded in Isham parish register].
- 26 October 1760 – 'Richard Walpole' was buried at Pitsford, a village three miles south of Brixworth.
- 25 February 1781 – 'Richard Waples Clerk of this Parish 20 Years' was buried at Isham, ten miles east of Brixworth.

(**) The age of '28 years and upwards' reported when the marriage licence was granted in October 1737 is fairly close to the probable age at that time of the son of William and Ann Waples who had been baptised at Harrington at the end of 1706. Kettering is ten miles north east of Brixworth.

William Waples (1708/9-1756)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 6 January 1708/9 of 'William ye son of William Waples and Ann his wife'.

It is not known at what stage William moved to London or what he did there for a living.

Jackson's Index states that William married Elisabeth Killam. The ceremony took place in the City of London, where the parish register of St Benet Paul's Wharf records the marriage on 2 May 1743 of 'Wm Wapels of St James Westmr Middlesex B. & Elizth Hillam of ye same parish. W.' (the letters B. and W. mean bachelor and widow respectively). The couple were parents of these children who were baptised on the dates shown:

Name	Baptised	Born
William	25 December 1746	
Robert	30 July 1748	
Elizabeth	2 December 1749	
Sarah	23 December 1753	2 December 1753

The first three baptisms took place at St George, Holborn, when the family were living at Orange Street. By the time Sarah was baptised, they had moved to Old Bailey and the ceremony was performed at St Sepulchre, Holborn. Only one of the four children appears to have died in infancy – Sarah whose burial at Chick Lane burial ground at the age of one is recorded in the register of St Sepulchre. The family was then still living at Old Bailey and also there on 15 April 1756 when the same register records the burial of 'William Walpole from Old Bailey in North [i.e. in the North burial ground] aged 45'. No cause of death was recorded.

Jackson's Index includes a note about William in its burial column that says 'In Bedlam 1755'. From 1676 to 1815, the Bethlem Hospital provided accommodation for patients who

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were not well in their wits in a large building which stood along the south side of the open space at Moorfields. It can be seen in the following print, which dates from 1747.

Records of Bethlem hospital state that 'William Wallpole' from the parish of St James Westminster was admitted on 14 March 1752 and that his securities were Henry Cooms of Windmill Street, hosier and John Holmes, breeches maker of 'Pickadilly', both of that parish.[6] These records also say that William died on 19 February 1753[7] – a date which is not at all consistent with the entry in the St Sepulchre parish register. The burials recorded in that register were entered in strict order of date, so there is no doubt that its chronology is reliable. 19 February 1753 is some ten months before the birth of William and Elizabeth's last child which clearly points to the date recorded by Bethlem as William's death being the date on which he was discharged from the hospital.

John Waples (1709/10-1780)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 22 February 1709/1710 of 'John son of William Waples and Ann his wife'.

Hannington parish register records that on 7 November 1743 'John Wapels of Brixworth and Sarah Coals of this parish of Hannington were maried by banes'. Jackson's Index described John's wife as 'Sarah Cole (born at Long Buckby), married at Hannington'. Their children were:

Name	Baptised	Married	Buried
William	1744	n/a	1745 Brixworth
William	1746		
James	1747	n/a	1747/8 Brixworth
Mary	1749/50	n/a	1750 Brixworth
Anne	1751		
Hannah	1754	n/a	1755 Brixworth

Brixworth parish register records the burial on 10 October 1775 of 'Sarah wife of John Walpole'. 'John Walpole' was buried on 9 April 1780, also at Brixworth.

[6] Bethlem Museum of the Mind: ARA-11, Admission register 1748-1775, page 50.
[7] Bethlem Museum of the Mind: ARA-06, Admission register 1737-1753, page 375.

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Lucy Waples (1711-1776)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 11 July 1711 of 'Lucy ye daughter of William Waples and Ann his wife'.

Jackson's index states that Lucy married George Harris and that the wedding took place at Finedon. It appears that location is not correct, as it is the parish register of Orlingbury which records the marriage on 25 May 1740 of 'George Harris of Finedon and Lucy Walpole of this parish'.

It was at Finedon, some 12 miles east of Brixworth, that George and Lucy's children were baptised:

Name	Baptised	Married	Buried
George	1740/1		
William	1742/3		
Elizabeth	1747		
Mary	1748	n/a	1770 Finedon
George	1750		
Robert	1753		1832 Finedon
Charles	1755	n/a	1756 Finedon
Lucy	1760	n/a	1790 Finedon

Finedon bishops transcript records the burial on 5 July 1776 of 'Harris Lucy wife of George ... in woolen'. The same source records that in 1807 'George Harris, carpenter, husband of Lucy decd. Almsman of Rothwell Hospital', died on 18 November and was buried on 21 November in woollen aged 89.

Jonathan Waples (1714-1791)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 8 September 1714 of 'Jonathan ye son of William Waples and Ann his wife'.

Pitsford parish register records the marriage on 10 July 1740 of 'Jonathan Waples of Brixworth and Elisabeth Hatton'. Their children, all baptised at Pitsford, were:

Name	Baptised	Married	Buried
Elizabeth	1741/2		
Anne	1742/3		
Jonathan	1745	n/a	1745/6
James	1746	n/a	1746
Martha	1749	n/a	1780
James	1752	n/a	1753
William	1754		1774
James	1757	n/a	1759

Pitsford parish register records the burial on 22 February 1771 of 'Elizabeth wife of Jonathan Waples'.

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Jonathan was not a widower for long. On 26 July 1771 Jonathan Waples widower of this parish & Mary Smith of the parish of Arthingworth widow were married at Pitsford by licence. The bride signed her name (with the same signature as in the 1766 marriage at Arthingworth of William Smith & Mary Padmore) but Jonathan made his distinctive mark. The witnesses were Wm Rigby & John Ager. The children of this second marriage were both baptised at Pitsford:

Name	Baptised	Married	Buried
Elizabeth	1773		
Jonathan	1773	n/a	1774

Pitsford parish register shows that the second of these pregnancies was disasterous. Jonathan (the child) was baptised on 12 December 1773, 'Mary wife of Jonathan Walpole' was buried on 8 January 1774 and 'Jonathan son of Jonathan Walpole' buried exactly one month later.

It appears that Jonathan senior did not marry again but remained at Pitsford, where the burial of 'Jonathan Walpole' took place on 24 July 1791.

Mary Waples (1715/6-

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 6 January 1715/6 of 'Mary daughter of William Waples and Ann his wife'.

When her father made his will in 1740, he mentioned his daughter 'Mary Waples', indicating that she was still unmarried at that stage. Jackson's Index states that Mary married Andrew Dickenson and settled at Kettering. However, no other information has been found about Andrew or to do with Mary's life as an adult.

James Waples (1717-1749)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 26 March 1711 of 'James son of William Waples and Ann his wife'. Finedon bishops transcript records the burial on 31 May 1749 of 'Warples James (of Brixworth) was buried May 31 in Woollen only'. It seems likely, though not certain, that James did not marry as on 21 June 1749 Ann Waples of Brixworth widow entered into a bond to administer the estate of her son James Waples who was described as a chaff-cutter late of Brixworth.

Sarah Waples (1720-1783)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 7 November 1720 of 'Sarah daughter of William Waples and Ann his wife'.

Brixworth parish register records the marriage on 15 July 1745 of 'William Rogers a sojourner at Hannington & Sarah Walpole of this parish by banns'.

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The first seven of the following children of William and Sarah Rogers were baptised at Brixworth and the last two at Flore, a village 12 miles to the south west:

Name	Baptised	Married	Buried
Anne	1745	John Jones 1770	
William	1746/7	Susanna Warner 1770	1810 Flore
Mary	1749		
John	1751		
Thomas	1753		
Elizabeth	1755	n/a	1780 Flore
Simon	1757		
Alice	1760		
Joannah	1762		

When recording the marriage in 1745, Jackson's Index adds the detail that William Rogers was ‘of Cricke’. However when, on another page, the Index lists the couple’s children it says that William Rogers who married Sarah Walpole in 1745 was 'of Floor and returned to Floor' - in each case the word 'Floor' being a replacement for the word 'Cricke'. When Anne, the eldest child of the 1745 marriage, herself married John Jones on 21 February 1770 she was described in the Brixworth register as 'eldest daughter to Widw. Rogers of Floor'. This establishes that William Rogers had died by that date and his widow was still alive then. William and Sarah's youngest child was baptised in November 1762, so the father must have died in 1762-1770. Sarah's husband was evidently the person whose burial on 15 May 1768 was recorded in the register of All Saints, Northampton as 'William Rogers of Floor died at the Infirmary'.

Flore parish register notes this burial: '1783 .... January 13 Sarah Rogers aged 65'.

Bridget Waples (1721-1786)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 27 December 1721 of 'Bridget daughter of William Waples and Ann his wife'.

Jackson’s Index states that Bridget ‘married to Joseph Tomson at Newport, settled at Sherington’. Presumably, the reference to Newport means Newport Pagnell.

Sherington, a parish is Bedfordshire, is some 23 miles south of Brixworth. These children of Joseph & Bridget Thompson/Tompson were all baptised and/or buried there:

Name	Baptised	Married	Buried
Mary	1747		
John	1749	n/a	1767
Dorothy	1751		
Joseph	1753		
James	1756		
Samuel	1758		
Bridget	1759		
David			1764

Bridget Thompson was buried at Sherington on 22 February 1786.

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Ann Waples (1725-)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 8 August 1725 of 'Ann daughter of William Waples and Ann his wife'. Anne Waples is included in the list of children in her father's will of 1740 but no other information that definitely relates to her has been identified.

Benjamin Waples (1726-)

Brixworth parish register records the baptism on 3 December 1726 of 'Benjamin son of William Walpole and Ann his wife' but contains no record of his burial. Nor does Jackson's Index provide information about his apart from his baptism. Benjamin is not included in the list of children in her father's will of 1740 so he had presumably died by then.

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Appendix A: Will of William Waples, probate 1741/1

In the Name of God Amen. I William Waples of Brixworth in the County of Northampton Butcher being in Sound and Perfect mind and memory (thanks be therefore given to Almighty God) but considering as well the Certainty and uncertainty of Death Do Therefore Make and Ordain this my Last Will and Testament in manner and forme following (that is to say)
First I commend my Soul into the Hands of Almighty God hoping through the Merritts Death and Passion of my Saviour Jesus Christ to have full and free Pardon of all my Sins and to Inheritt Everlasting life And my Body I commit to the Earth to be Buryed at the Discretion of my Executrix hereinafter named And as touching all such Personall Estate as it hath Pleased Almighty God to bestow upon me I give and Dispose thereof as follows (that is to say)
Imprimis I will that my Debts and Funerall Expenses be first Paid Satisfied and Discharged and for that End and Purpose I Do hereby Give Devise and Bequeath all and Singular my Messuages Lands Tenements Hereditaments and Premises in Brixworth aforesaid and Lubnam in the said County of Northampton to my Beloved Wife Anne Waple In Trust to raise money by Sale Lease or Mortgage thereof for the Payment of my Just Debts and what thereof shall remain Unsold after the Payment of my Debts aforesaid I Give to my Children Richard Waples William Waples John Waples Lusey Harris Jonathan Waples Mary Waples James Waples Sarah Waples Bridget Waples and Anne Waples Share and Share alike within One Year after the Death of my said Wife Anne Waples
Item all my Household Goods Household stuffe Implements of husbandry Stock of Cattle Stock of Corn Graine and Hay and all other my Personall Estate whatsoever and wheresoever I Do Give and Devise unto my said Wife Anne Waples whom I make Sole Executrix of this my Last Will and Testament hereby Revoaking all former Wills by me at any time heretofore made
In Witness whereof the said William Waples hath to this his last Will and Testament Sett his hand and Seale this Thirtyth Day of November in the fourteenth year of the Reigne of our Sovereigne Lord George the Second by the Grace of God of Great Britaine France and Ireland King Defender of the faith and so forth and in the Year of our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Forty

The marke of William Waples
[this encloses a very uncertain attempt to sign his name]

Sealed Published and Declared by the Testator as his last Will and Testament in the presence of us and by us Subscribed as Witnesses thereto in his presence
Rich. Green [signed]
Mary Green [signed]
James Green [signed]

23d January 1741 Anne Waples the sole Executrix named in the above written Will of William Waples deceased was sworn etc well and faithfully to fulfil the same and that the said Testator at the time of his Death was not possessed of Goods etc to the Value of twenty pounds
Before me E: Watkin AM Surrogate